

# ‘I am still here’: Leonard Peltier’s letter to supporters

written by Leonard Peltier  
September 13, 2023



Leading up to the Free Leonard Peltier Rally 79th Birthday Action on September 12th, Indigenous Peoples from across Turtle Island joined together to voice the demand to #FreeLeonardPeltier. Photo by Willi White for NDN Collective.

Dear friends, relatives, supporters, loved ones:

79 years old. Mother Earth has taken us on another journey around Grandfather Sun. Babies have taken their first breath. People have lived, loved, and died. Seeds have been planted and sent their roots deep below red earth and their breath to the Stars and our Ancestors.

I am still here.

Time has twisted one more year out of me. A year that has been a moment. A year that has been a lifetime. For almost five decades I've existed in a cage of concrete and steel. With the "good time" calculations of the system, I've actually served over 60 years.

Year after year, I have encouraged you to live as spirit warriors. Even while in here, I can envision what is real and far beyond these walls. I've seen a reawakening of an ancient Native pride that does my heart good.

I may leave this place in a box. That is a cold truth. But I have put my heart and soul into making our world a better place and there is a lot of work left to do - I would like to get out and do it with you.

I know that the spirit warriors coming up behind me have the heart and soul to fight racism and oppression, and to fight the greed that is poisoning our lands, waters, and people.

We are still here.

Remember who you are, even if they come for your land, your water, your family. We are children of Mother Earth and we owe her and her other children our care.

I long to turn my face to the sky. In this cage, I am denied that simple pleasure. I am in prison, but in my mind, I remain as I was born: a free Native spirit.

That is what allows me to laugh, keeps me laughing. These walls cannot contain my laughter – or my hope.

I know there are those who stand with me, who work around the clock for my freedom. I have been blessed to have such friends.

We are still here and you give me hope.

I hope to breathe free air before I die. Hope is a hard thing to hold, but no one is strong enough to take it from me.

I love you. I hope for you. I pray for you.

And prayer is more than a cry to the Creator that runs through your head. Prayer is an action.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse

Doksha,  
Leonard Peltier

Source: [NDN Collective](https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2023/09/13/i-am-still-here-leonard-peltiers-letter-to-supporters/)

